

Message Text

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DRAFTED BY NEA:AR DAY:TH

APPROVED BY THE SECRETARY

NEA:ALATHERTON, JR.

P:PHABIB

S/S:MR. BRIDGES

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT NIACT IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 178649

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FOR AMBASSADOR FROM SECRETARY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: AEMR, LE, US

SUBJECT: CHRISTIAN FAILURE TO GUARANTEE AIRPORT SECURITY

REF: BEIRUT 6412

1. YOU SHOULD CONVEY THE FOLLOWING MESSAGE URGENTLY, BY WHATEVER MEANS YOU CHOOSE, TO MARONITE LEADERSHIP:

2. THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT, MORE THAN THREE DAYS AGO, CONVEYED A MESSAGE TO THE CHRISTIAN MARONITE LEADERSHIP IN LEBANON SEEKING ASSURANCES THAT THE CHRISTIAN FORCES WOULD RESPECT THE SAFETY OF AN AIRPLANE THAT WE MIGHT BRING INTO BEIRUT AIRPORT FOR THE PURPOSE OF EVACUATING AMERICANS AND OTHER FOREIGNERS. DURING THIS PERIOD WE HAVE RECEIVED NO REPLY WHATEVER FROM LEADERS REPRESENTING THE TWO PRINCIPAL MARONITE FORCES. IT SEEMS INCONCEIVABLE TO US THAT THESE LEADERS WOULD ADOPT A POSITION THAT IN EFFECT THREATENS THE LIVES AND SAFETY OF AMERICANS AND OTHER

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FOREIGNERS WHO WISH TO LEAVE BEIRUT BECAUSE OF THE RISKS

AND HARDSHIPS RESULTING FROM THE CIVIL STRIFE. IF THIS
IS INDEED THE POSITION THE MARONITE LEADERSHIP INTENDS TO
TAKE, AND IF WE CONTINUE TO RECEIVE NO ASSURANCES FOR THE
SAFETY OF THIS HUMANITARIAN MOVEMENT, OUR ATTITUDE TOWARD
THE CHRISTIAN CAUSE COULD NOT
HELP BUT BE AFFECTED. KISSINGER

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